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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
FRIDAY, MARCH 16, 2007

In Today's Papers

Assistant Secretary Fried Testifies against Armenian Resolution
Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Radikal, Cumhuriyet, Zaman, Yeni Safak
and others report
Daniel Fried, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian
affairs, told a hearing of a House foreign affairs subcommittee on
Europe that Turkey has warned the US that approval of the resolution
could lead to a shutdown of the Incirlik Air Base or a restriction
on US overflight privileges granted by Turkey. Fried added Turkey
might also restrict the use of the Habur crossing on the border of
Iraq and Turkey, used for the delivery of supplies to US troops in
Iraq. Fried stressed adoption of the resolution would silence those
in Turkey calling for a "truthful exploration" of the events in
pursuit of Turkey's reconciliation with Armenia. Fried also said
the resolution is opposed by the some 70,000-strong Turkish-Armenian
community, which has been warning that the measure would "raise
popular emotions so dramatically as to threaten their personal
security." Fried warned that the adoption of the resolution might
also fuel fresh anti-American sentiments in Turkey.

Ralston on the PKK, Makhmour Camp
All papers report Joseph Ralston, US special envoy for countering
the PKK, told Associated Press that US pressure has resulted in
moves against the PKK's operations by the Iraqi and European
authorities. Ralston said the US has not yet met Turkish demands
for the capture of the PKK leaders and closure of Makhmour Camp in
northern Iraq. "All options are on the table," Ralston said, "the
PKK is a terrorist organization and needs to be put out of
business." He noted Turkey has suffered greatly at the hands of the
PKK. Ralston added the US, Turkey and Iraq are close to a deal to
close Makhmour Camp, recalling that in January, the US and Iraqi
forces searched the camp and found artillery shells believed to have
belonged to the PKK. Papers say Ralston's remarks were in contrast
to earlier statements by the Iraqi Kurdish officials and the UN
inspectors that no weapons were found during the search in the camp.
Ralston also said the PKK has held a ceasefire since October that
was arranged by Massoud Barzani, the president of the regional

Kurdish administration.

In response to press questions yesterday, UNHCR Turkey representative Metin Corabatir said no weapons were found during the search in Makhmour Camp. "At a recent meeting in Geneva, the US confirmed the civilian nature of the camp," said Corabatir.

Turkish Security Body Warns against Operations into Northern Iraq

Cumhuriyet, Zaman and Yeni Safak report CNN-Turk television said Thursday a report drafted by the Turkish National Security Council (MGK) warns that if Turkey enters northern Iraq, it will be "stuck in a swamp." "A cross border military incursion into northern Iraq will have a large human toll and bring a heavy financial burden," the report said, stressing that Turkey should improve ties with all groups in northern Iraq, including the Kurds. The MGK has denied the report.

Editorial Commentary on Ocalan/the PKK, US/the PKK
Mehmed Ali Birand observes in the tabloid daily Posta: "Even though while in prison Ocalan has never been out of the spotlight, it is also true that his PKK leadership has been a subject of debate. There has been a search for leaders to replace him who are both active and capable of controlling the organization. Although several names were in circulation, none of them has been found to be acceptable. Following the Iraq occupation, Barzani managed to increase his influence immensely in the region and he is still influential. However recent developments also indicate that Ocalan has regained his previous status and managed to return to the limelight regardless of the criticism against him, including that he is a servant of the Turkish deep state. It is now too early to talk about it, but a campaign to free Ocalan should not come as a

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surprise. However, the most important requirement for this to happen -- the PKK abandons terrorist acts and leaves Kurdish politics to the DTP - seems unlikely in the near future."

DTP Pledges Peaceful Nevruz; Further DTP Detentions
Milliyet, Sabah, Hurriyet, Radikal, Cumhuriyet and others: Ahmet Turk, leader of the DTP, Turkey's main Kurdish party, stressed that he will do his best to ensure peaceful Nevruz celebrations and that his party will organize Nevruz celebrations in Mersin, Sanliurfa, Diyarbakir, Batman, Van and Istanbul. Turk added that they are against celebrating Nevruz on a date other than March 21 and that he will be attending the celebrations in Diyarbakir.

Meanwhile, Izmir police yesterday detained 14 people, including the DTP Izmir head Mehmet Mihdi Arslan, Torbali district head Husnu Koyuncu and Buca district head Mehmet Emin Yildiz.

NGO Campaign for More Women in Politics
Liberal Radikal reports KADER, an association to support female candidates for the Turkish parliament, has launched a campaign to increase to 10 percent the women members in the assembly. The current percentage of women lawmakers in the Turkish parliament is 4.4. At a press conference in Istanbul, KADER called on political parties to apply a quota of female candidates. In the meeting, KADER members posed for the press wearing fake moustaches, asking "Do you have to be a male to enter the parliament?"

TV Highlights
NTV (6 a.m.)

Domestic News

- Turkey has decided to suspend the construction of a new natural gas pipeline parallel to the Blue Stream pipeline in retaliation to a Russian project bypassing Turkey and carrying Russian oil to Europe through Bulgaria and Greece.
- A Turkish delegation of archeologists and historians will travel to Jerusalem on March 20 to examine Israel's excavation work near the al-Aqsa mosque.
- The Turkish Foreign Ministry said Turkey has not contacted any

third country in connection with the former Iranian deputy defense minister Ali Reza Asgari who went missing in Istanbul.

- A Parliamentary debate over corruption and irregularities in Istanbul municipality became heated and AKP MP Ahmet Isik spit on CHP MP Mehmet Ali Ozpolat.

International News

- US Senators Dick Durbin and John Ensign have introduced an Armenian genocide bill in the US Senate.

- Reporters Without Borders said leaked reports show that in Turkey the military and the prime minister's office punish and reward journalists according to their "loyalty."

- The government of Iraq, under heavy international criticism for the way it executed Saddam Hussein, wants to abolish capital punishment.

- Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh said security services were doing all they can to secure the release of a BBC reporter abducted in Gaza.

<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

WILSON